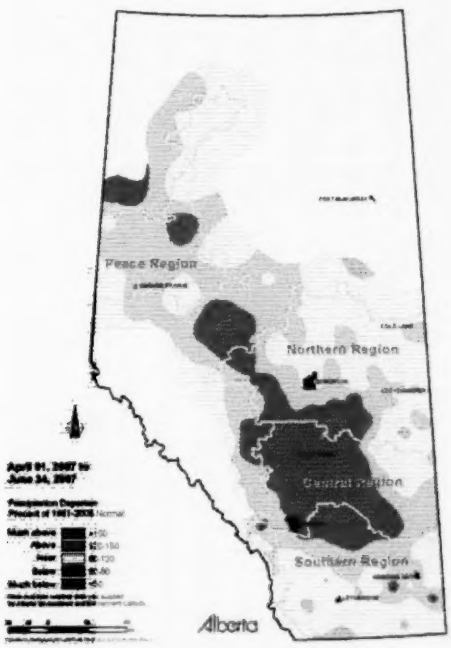
Crop Conditions as of June 21, 2007

Excessive moisture has resulted in some of Alberta's cropland being left unseeded for the 2007 crop season. Provincially, it is estimated that 93% of total cropland have been seeded, with 2% still intended for the seeding of forages. About 5% of total cropland is expected to be left unseeded. Table 1 (see below) presents estimates of regional and provincial seeded area.

Crop development has varied considerably across the province this year, and is generally 1-2 weeks behind normal. The late crop is attributed mainly to delayed seeding, and to some extent, the recent cool, wet weather. Some of crops seeded in June have just emerged, while in the Southern Region, early seeded canola and dry peas have started flowering, and fall-seeded cereals are heading out. In the North East and North West Regions, spring cereals are mostly in the tillering stage.

Despite the late start, major and specialty crops are mostly in good to excellent condition. Provincially, spring wheat is rated as 2% poor, 16% fair, 65% good, and 17% excellent, with a similar rating for barley. Canola is reported as 4% poor, 17% fair, 62% good, and 17% excellent. Rating of dry peas is 3% poor, 12% fair, 64% good, and 21% excellent. About 90% of fall-seeded cereals are in good to excellent condition. In many areas, crops are turning yellow in low-lying fields due to excessive moisture. Additionally, hailstorms have caused light crop damage across Alberta, with more noticeable damage for canola.

The recent rains have brought various amounts of precipitation to Alberta. Rating of surface soil moisture is 1% poor, 8% fair, 43% good, 36% excellent, and 12% excessive, while sub-surface moisture is reported as 1% poor, 7% fair, 42% good, 42% excellent, and 8% excessive. Standing water in low-lying fields is reported in many areas.



Weed growth and delayed herbicide application are the major concerns for producers. The estimated progress of herbicide application is less than 60% complete in Alberta.

Given adequate moisture reserves, pasture and tame hay in most areas are showing good growth. In fact, the first-cut haying operation has already begun in the Southern Region. Provincially, pasture and tame hay are rated as 1% poor, 10% fair, 58% good, and 31% excellent.

In some areas, flea beetles, gophers, and grasshoppers have caused crop damage. Also reported are problems with army cutworms, wireworms, root maggots, and lygus bugs.

Table 1: Estimates of Regional and Provincial Seeded Area

	Seeded	Intended for forage seeding	To be left unseeded	Total
South	98.5%	0.5%	1.0%	100.0%
Central	88.5%	3.5%	8.0%	100.0%
N. East	96.0%	3.5%	0.5%	100.0%
N. West	95.5%	1.5%	3.0%	100.0%
Peace	83.5%	1.5%	15.0%	100.0%
Alberta	**93.0%**	**2.0%**	**5.0%**	**100.0%**

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Food, Statistics and Data Development Unit

Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen and staff of AFSC for the partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program.

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2007 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- Major and specialty crops are developing quite well, with early seeded canola and dry peas starting to flower. Although light crop damage from hailstorms is reported across the region, in some localized areas, crop damage is significant.
- Due to excessive moisture, some fields have been left unseeded. The unseeded area accounts for about 1% of total crop area in the region, and are mostly in the Strathmore/High River/Vulcan areas.
- In the Strathmore/Brooks/High River areas, excessive moisture has caused crops to turn yellow in low-lying fields. Overall, surface soil moisture is rated as 7% fair, 60% good, 30% excellent, and 3% excessive. Sub-surface moisture is reported as 1% poor, 8% fair, 59% good, 30% excellent, and 2% excessive.
- Post-emergent spraying for weed control is estimated at 70% complete, while the first-cut haying operation is 12% done. Pasture and tame hay are generally in good to excellent condition.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- The recent rains and hailstorms have brought large amounts of precipitation to many areas of the region, causing major delays in herbicide application. Saturated fields and standing water in low-lying areas remain a major problem for producers. Overall, surface soil moisture is rated as 16% good, 56% excellent, and 28% excessive, while sub-surface moisture is 22% good, 52% excellent, and 26% excessive.
- Due to excessive moisture, unseeded area accounts for 8% of the total area originally intended for crop production in the region. The unseeded area is mostly in areas west of Castor/Hanna, and is estimated as high as 25% in the Didsbury area.
- Herbicide application is estimated at 53% complete. Crops and pasture are mostly rated as good to excellent, but in some fields, crops and pasture are showing signs of stress from excessive moisture.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- Rain showers and hailstorms have brought various amounts of precipitation to the region. Due to crop damage from flooding and hail, some fields have been re-seeded. Overall, crops are mostly in good to excellent condition. Also, the unseeded area caused by excessive moisture is minimal.
- Some areas in the region remain wet, while others still need rain. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 2% poor, 12% fair, 64% good, 17% excellent, and 5% excessive. Sub-surface moisture is reported as 8% fair, 65% good, 25% excellent, and 2% excessive.
- Most of the pasture and tame hay are showing good growth, and producers have just started the first-cut haying operation. Herbicide application is estimated at 55% complete.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- Precipitation received during the last two weeks varied considerably across the region. As such, some areas are still very wet, while others need rain. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 2% poor, 15% fair, 48% good, 26% excellent, and 9% excessive, while sub-surface moisture is reported as 2% poor, 16% fair, 52% good, 28% excellent, and 2% excessive. Due to excessive moisture, about 3% of the total area originally intended for crop production have been left unseeded.
- Crops are mostly in good to excellent condition, although crop development is about two weeks behind normal. Hailstorms have caused light crop damage, mainly to canola.
- About 85% of pasture and nearly 90% of tame hay are rated as good to excellent. Herbicide application is estimated at 50% complete, while the first-cut haying operation has just begun.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Due to excessive moisture, about 15% of total area originally intended for crop production has been left unseeded. In the Spirit River/Fairview/Wanham areas, unseeded area accounts for about 20% of total cropland. As well, snow, frost and hail have caused crop damage, with some re-seeding in the northern parts of the region.
- Crop development is significantly behind normal. Regarding crop conditions, spring wheat is rated as 2% poor, 36% fair, 57% good, and 5% excellent. Canola is 9% poor, 31% fair, 57% good, and 3% excellent.
- Overall, surface moisture is rated as 2% poor, 5% fair, 31% good, 50% excellent, and 12% excessive, while sub-surface moisture is 2% fair, 18% good, 76% excellent, and 4% excessive.
- About 75% of pasture and tame hay are rated as good to excellent. Herbicide application is estimated at 66% complete.

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